

XI. *Descriptions of some Species of the Lepidopterous Genus Oiketicus, from Ceylon.* By ROBERT TEMPLETON, Esq., R. A. (in a Letter addressed to J. O. Westwood.)

[Read 6th April, 1846.]

“*Tertia species, ni fallor, mox describenda.*”—

Rev. L. Guilding, Linn. Trans. xv. p. 375.

ABOUT fourteen months ago, while searching a stunted bush (*Citrus decumana*) for caterpillars, I observed, depending from one of the branches, a singularly formed cocoon, whose mode of attachment excited my attention. I brought home the branch and placed it in one of my breeding boxes, the lid of which was formed of glass. After a few hours, happening to pass, I was surprised to find that the cocoon had left the place where I had deposited it, and had become attached to the glass, a fine thread from the tail still, however, connecting it to the branch. I anticipated the possession of a gigantic *Psyche*, but after a little time I recollected that I had met with a somewhat similar cocoon figured somewhere in the Linnæan Transactions, and on searching found the paper of the Rev. L. Guilding, which left me without a doubt of its being a new “*Oiketicus.*” Taking another peep into the box I found my new acquaintance with its head out, and perceived that it corresponded exactly with the figure given in his plate 2, in form, and nearly in size (fig. 6), but differed slightly in the dark markings on the head. The mode of marching along the glass was very curious: swinging its head from side to side, it attached by its spinnerets twenty minute threads, a quarter of an inch long, to the glass; it then hooked its fore claws into the loop, advanced a step and begun another set 0·2 from the former; in this way it marched about three inches in half an hour, reaching the wooden side of the box, across which it descended by a precisely similar course of operations: when disturbed it immediately retired within the cocoon, the funnel-shaped membrane or hood, attached to the more rigid front of the cocoon, closing up the mouth; when it has advanced to such a distance that the fine thread which steadies the smaller extremity or tail becomes too much tightened to permit a farther stretching, it is disengaged and a new attachment formed to some other body, usually a leaf or fine twig, which will yield an inch or two without the thread breaking. I supplied fresh leaves (*C. decumana*) every day; in about two weeks I found it attached to the glass by the extremity

of the hood, a numerous set of fine lines radiating from its flocculent edges, and attaching themselves and it to the glass. In this state it remained about two months, when I noticed an unusual bustle in the box, and found, on examination, a most active little creature just emerged from the case; he was dashing about as if mightily impatient of the narrow limits put to his excursions, lashing his long tail about with much vivacity. Before I could secure him he had injured himself much against the twigs, leaves and sides of the box, but fortunately not sufficiently to obliterate the characteristic markings on the wings. I transferred him to my insect case, and named him in compliment to Mr. Guilding's prophecy,

*Oiketicus tertius*. (Pl. V. fig. 1.)

Body purplish black, covered with very coarse longish hairs. Abdomen dark brown with lateral tufts. Antennæ brown; basal half pectinated. Anterior legs with strong marginal hairs; tarsi and hinder legs nearly naked. Wings dark grey, elongate, covered with coarse pulvinuli, a black triangular dash in the centre, with two smaller, less distinct in a line, towards the tip. Posterior wings securiform, triangular, concolorous. It belongs to same division with *O. Kirbii*.

In May last I received from my friend Mr. F. Layard another cocoon of larger size, which he found on a cinnamon bush; I supplied the inmate with leaves of different kinds, but could not discover any that it would touch. It soon attached itself to the glass, and has remained there ever since.

In July last Mr. R. Dawson brought me from his coffee estate in Saffragam a large female nearly of the size of the magnified figure in plate 2 (Lin. Trans.): it was found on the leaf of *Delima sarmentosa*. The case is singular, being composed of a little bundle of sticks placed parallel to each other, one inch and a half long, twelve in number, tied together by a few fine threads wrapped round the whole at the top, and a similar set at the bottom, and interiorly connected by threads, which form the outer envelope of the soft silky cocoon in which the animal resides; the expansile neck is precisely similar to that described above. Before I could get a drawing taken, she had attached herself to the glass permanently, and I have been afraid to touch it since. I am satisfied it is a female, from an account given me of the whole process of sexual intercourse with a male, by Mr. F. Dick, on the authority of his superintendent, who had observed them more than once.

I expect specimens from this gentleman. It is from size and the brilliant yellow colour of the head and first rings unquestionably a new species.

In August I found on another pamplemos bush two more cocoons resembling nearly exactly those of the male described, but rather smaller and more conical. One of them came out on the 22d of October, warm moist weather, and I got, but much injured, the following species, which, from its agreeing so closely with *O. (Cryptothelea, Duncan) Macleayi*, I have named,

*Oiketicus (Cryptothelea) consortus.* (Pl. V. fig. 7.)

Body brown, covered with coarse longish brown hairs, abdomen brownish, nearly naked, last annuli yellow, with dark margins; anterior legs with marginal brown hairs; posterior nearly naked; middle intermediate in this character; antennæ pectinate to the tip, dark brown. Wings uniform brown, broad.

Plate V. fig. 1, *Oiketicus tertius*, natural size; fig. 2, cocoon; fig. 3, pupa case; fig. 4, exhibiting the ribbed appearance of a ring; fig. 5, male suspended at rest; fig. 6, cocoon of *Oiketicus consortus*; fig. 7, *O. consortus* natural size; fig. 8, case found *Delima sarmentosa*.

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XII. *Remarks on the Habits and Economy of a Species of Oiketicus found on Shrubs in the Vicinity of Sydney, N. S. W.* By W. W. SAUNDERS, Esquire, F. L. S., &c. Drawn up from Notes furnished by W. Stephenson, Esq.

[Read 1st February, 1847.]

THE larvæ are enclosed in a silken case, fortified on the outside with pieces of stick of various lengths, generally about half an inch on the main part, but towards the lower end there are usually a few from one to three inches in length, in the centre of which the lower end of the silken case protrudes free from the sticks, and is very flexible. Through this aperture the larva discharges its excrement and exuviae. The upper or head extremity of the case is a beautiful tissue of soft silk, forming a tube half an inch in width, through which the larva emerges to feed and change its position. It frequently comes out half its length, but most commonly only protrudes its six true feet and the four first segments